

for information on incidents of ecoterrorism, with the hope that investigators stay ahead of the curve in preventing additional acts of terror.

In addition, it would establish the Environmental Terrorism Reduction Program in the Department of Justice. This program would authorize the Attorney General to designate any area as a high intensity environmental terrorism area. After making such a designation local law enforcement agencies could access federal funding to assist them in solving and preventing these types of crimes in the future.

This program is similar to the Department of Justice's High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area program (HIDTA), which has been extraordinarily useful in Oregon and other states in helping make our communities better places to live.

I ask my colleagues to join me in this goal, and to support the Environmental Terrorism Reduction Act.

#### SCHOOL READINESS ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

**HON. TOM UDALL**

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 24, 2003*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2210) to authorize the Head Start Act to improve the school readiness of disadvantaged children, and for other purposes:

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 2210. If you're looking for a way to dismantle a proven, beneficial, effective program, then this bill is for you.

The Head Start program has been a success for nearly 40 years. During that time, it has served over 20 million children. In fact, there are members in this House that were Head Start children who attest to the program's success. Instead of passing this bill, which could potentially increase class size, cut off services to 3-year-olds, and eliminate crucial health services, we should be improving Head Start by fully funding it.

Thousands of children in my district attend the Head Start program. To be exact 3,023 children in Northern New Mexico could be affected by this bill. Of those children, 86 percent live in families that have incomes below the federal poverty line. Ninety percent receive basic health care and are twice as likely as other low-income children to receive basic medical care. We have 60 Head Start centers in my district, and 162 classrooms. Passage of this bill means an unknown future for these children. Will the quality of their education be put in jeopardy? Will they continue to receive medical care? Will their teachers be hired on a discriminatory basis?

We must not ignore the successful history of the Head Start program. If we really want to improve the program, we should fully fund the program to expand access to all eligible preschoolers, improve access to Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, improve teacher quality by requiring that more teachers get bachelor's degrees, and enhance Head Start's focus on pre-literacy, language, and pre-math skills.

Groups in my district that oppose passage of this bill include the Jicarilla Apache Nation,

the Pueblo of Isleta, and the Pueblo of Acoma. National groups opposing this bill include the NAACP, the National Education Foundation, the ACLU, the Coalition Against Religious Discrimination, the National League of Cities, and Catholic Charities USA, among many others. This long and diverse list is proof of the many problems with this bill.

I cannot conclude my statement without expressing my concern that this is a disturbing pattern for the Majority on education. Numerous programs—Head Start, college aid, public school education—are in danger of being dismantled. I will continue to defend programs that are proven to work, fight to fully fund those programs, and oppose efforts to dismantle them. This bill is no exception and I urge a no vote.

#### IN SUPPORT OF THE YEAR OF THE KOREAN WAR VETERAN RESOLUTION, H. CON. RES. 212

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, July 25, 2003*

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 212, the Year of the Korean War Veteran resolution, and I commend its sponsor, my colleague, Congressman SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

The resolution marks the final year of the United States' 50th anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration and the 50th year of the Armistice.

We celebrate the Armistice which ended the War, but we do so with the knowledge that no formal peace treaty was ever signed, and that only a fragile peace has endured across the tense demilitarized zone dividing North and South. The conflict, so aptly called "the Forgotten War," took 54,000 American lives. Another 103,000 Americans were wounded, 5,000 were missing in action, and 7,000 were held as prisoners of war. The sacrifices of America's fighting men and women transformed Korea into a thriving economic partner of the U.S. and a powerful front-line democracy against the tyranny of communism.

Fifty years after the end of hostilities, the guns across the border are still silent, but the region and the world are increasingly fearful of the possibility of a new war on the peninsula. With the announcement of its nuclear capability by the government in the North, not only the U.S., but our friends in the region—Japan, China, Russia, and particularly South Korea, are now searching for ways to diffuse an impending crisis.

North Korea's intentions are not entirely understood, but the country's militancy are clearly worsened by its poverty and isolation. The situation requires a skillful hand in dealing with a government that sometimes seems motivated by desperation.

I encourage President Bush to work with our allies in the region in pursuing negotiations and a peaceful resolution of a growing crisis. Threats and intimidation will not succeed in our dealings with North Korea.

#### FINANCIAL AID SIMPLIFICATION ACT OF 2003

**HON. RAHM EMANUEL**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, July 25, 2003*

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, today, along with Congressman BUCK MCKEON and 13 additional bipartisan cosponsors, I introduced the Financial Aid Simplification Act of 2003. This bill stands to make applying for financial aid significantly easier for students and families.

The process of applying for the Pell Grant and other student financial aid is unnecessarily complicated. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is a one hundred-plus question, extremely complicated form that creates an unnecessary barrier to students applying for aid.

The bill directs the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, which provides advice and counsel to Congress and the Secretary of Education on student financial aid matters, to conduct a thorough study, within two years, of how to streamline the aid process and make it easier for students. Within one year after the study is completed, the Secretary of Education must implement the recommended changes.

The Committee's goals will include significantly reducing the number of questions on the FAFSA, simplifying the language used on the form itself, revising the needs analysis formula to reduce the administrative burden for students, higher education institutions, and the federal government, and allowing certain students to be fast-tracked through the application process when they have already provided financial information to the federal government by qualifying for other forms of federal financial assistance.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the Financial Aid Simplification Act of 2003 requires the Secretary of Education to make special efforts to notify students who qualify for free lunch or food stamps of their eligibility for the maximum Pell Grant. This bill will go a long way to help American families gain access to higher education. I strongly encourage my colleagues to support this important legislation.

#### ARTICLE BY AMBASSADOR ASMEROM

**HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, July 25, 2003*

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call to the attention of the House of Representatives an article by Girma Asmerom, Ambassador of Eritrea to the United States. His article celebrates July 4th, American Independence Day, and discusses the challenges of the young independent nation of Eritrea. Highlighting Eritrea's developing democratic system and successful campaign to stamp out corruption, Ambassador Asmerom states that his people seek "trade and investment, not handouts from our partners and taxpayers." I thank Ambassador Asmerom for his kind words during July, the month we celebrate America's independence, and wish the people of Eritrea well in the days ahead.